

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 2. The attached Replacement Sheet replaces the original sheet including Fig. 2. In Figure 2, a lead line has been added for call-out number 19.

REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 14, 2009. Claims 1-5, 7-9, 11 and 12 are pending in this application, with claim 1 being in independent form. By the present Amendment, claims 1 and 4 have been amended. Claims 2-5, 8 and 9 have been withdrawn from consideration. It is submitted that no new matter has been added and no new issues have been raised by the present Amendment.

The drawings were objected to because of an informality in Figure 2. Figure 2 has been corrected to attend to the points raised in the Office Action and, in particular, to include a reference line for call-out number 19. A Substitute Sheet is submitted herewith including this change. Withdrawal of the objection to Figure 2 is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 4 were objected to because several reference characters were not provided in parenthesis. The claims have been reviewed and amended to attend to this formality. Withdrawal of the objection to the claims is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 7, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly obvious from WO 00/02715 to Newell et al. in view of U.S. Patent 5,002,524 to Mills and U.S. Patent 3,895,549 to Noda. Claims 1, 7, 11 and 12 were also rejected under Section 103(a) as allegedly obvious from Newell et al. in view of Mills and U.S. Patent 5,386,753 to Baron et al. Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits independent claim 1 is patentable from the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 1 relates to a machine for slitting plane packaging blanks comprising a driving roller assembly for advancing said packaging blanks and at least one rotatable slitting roller with at least one knife for producing a front edge slit and/or a rear edge slit in each packaging blank. A driving motor is connected to the slitting roller. The knife is arranged at an

initial position (position B, Fig. 2) in which the first knife end edge is positioned at a predetermined central angle x from the cutting site (the nip) substantially corresponding to the desired slit length. A program timer controls the driving motor and rotation of the rotatable slitting roller such that when the front edge of the blank has reached a cutting site the program timer turns the rotatable slitting roller such that the first knife end edge of the first knife portion turns from the initial position forward until the front edge slit has been cut. After the rear edge slit has been cut (if a cut is made), the blade returns to the initial position ready for the next blank.

According to an embodiment of the present disclosure, a rotatable slitting roller (7, Fig. 1) is arranged with a knife 9. A back-pressure roller 8 is provided below the slitting roller and includes two relatively thin, circular disks interspaced a distance corresponding to the thickness of the knife, the knife extending a distance into the space between the two circular disks. As will be appreciated from the figures of the present disclosure, the slitting roller and back-pressure roller not only support the knife and circular disks, respectively, but during operation, these rollers provide additional support for the blank as the blank is fed through the machine. In addition, since the driving motor is connected to the slitting roller (and not a series of gears), more accurate and direct control is provided. Of course, the claims are not limited to the disclosed embodiments.

In contrast, in Newell, the slotter heads are rotatably mounted through the use of bearings 64 (page 12, lines 24-27) and are driven through a set of gears (e.g., see Fig. 7(a)).

Newell does not teach or suggest a slitting roller or back-pressure roller as claimed. In addition, Applicant finds no teaching or suggestion in Newell of a driving motor connected to such a slitting roller as now claimed.

In addition, according to an embodiment of the present disclosure, the knife is arranged at an initial position (position B, Fig. 2) in which the first knife end edge is positioned at a predetermined central angle x from the cutting site (the nip) substantially corresponding to the

desired slit length. A program timer controls the driving motor and rotation of the rotatable slitting roller such that when the front edge of the blank has reached a cutting site the program timer turns the rotatable slitting roller such that the first knife end edge of the first knife portion turns from the initial position forward until the front edge slit has been cut.

In Newell, the initial position of the blade is at a point on the circumference of the blade equal to the intended leading slot length B, plus the acceleration zone A (page 15, lines 26-31).

That is, according to embodiments of the present disclosure, because of the specific arrangement of the slitting roller which is connected to the driving motor which is controlled by the program timer, the acceleration zone is not required, which makes the present system particularly accurate and reliable.

The other cited references are not believed to provide any of the elements missing from Newell that would have made the claims obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art.

Accordingly, Applicants submits independent claim 1 is patentable over the cited art.

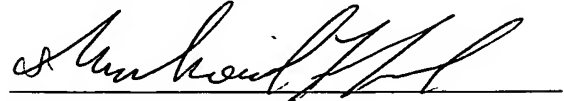
The Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition, and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite fees to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Entry of this amendment and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Richard F. Jaworski", is written over a horizontal line.

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